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Multidisciplinary Aspects of Design

Objects, Processes, Experiences and
Narratives

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Introduction

This book is the result of a long research process. The work started in 2020 with an exhibition held in Parma (*Design! Oggetti processi esperienze*, CSAC Università degli Studi di Parma), and a book of the same title, edited by F. Zanella (with essays by G. Bosoni, E. Di Stefano, G.L. Iannilli, G. Matteucci and R. Trocchianesi) and published in 2023 (Electa Milano) centered on the role of archives as memory repositories and agents for contemporary design. This first period of reflection was followed by an international conference: *Design! O.P.E.N.* (<https://www.designopen.it>) held in Parma on May 5–6, 2022. The present volume contains most of the papers presented at the conference.

Starting from the first volume (*Design! Oggetti processi esperienze*), the research was always characterized by a multidisciplinary approach, which became even more multidisciplinary at the international conference held in 2022.

In fact, the conference was organized by a network of scholars from the world of design, philosophy and history of art, whose aim was to intertwine several types of knowledge. Consequently, multidisciplinary is also the main feature of this second volume whose objective is to reflect, in an integrated manner, on the different dimensions of design, using competencies from the field of design and from that of humanities.

The aim of this project is to create a repertoire of opportunities of exchange and of relation among the culture of designers and the applied marketability of humanists in the project and in the innovation processes, in particular those design processes characterized by an important social and cultural impact.

In this context of exploration and experimentation in the territory of bordering subjects, stands the interpretative model in Fig. 1. It represents the potentialities in the interdisciplinary relations which verify the logics and dynamics in the “behavior” of a designer dealing with some project variables. On the vertical axis, humanities and techniques can be found, and on horizontal one, research and project.

Where these variables intersect, there can be four types of intervention:

- The intersection of techniques and research generates technological experimentation considering techniques and technology fields in continuous and fast evolution.
- Where research and humanities intersect, we are in the field of a historical/social/philosophical approach in which the analytical and critical dimensions of the research itself are developed.
- Between humanities and project, we are in the area on which our project focuses: here the meta-project approach becomes the synthetic expression of the relation among the two poles.
- Finally, between project and technique, we are in the area where the executive component of the project itself emerges.

There have already been significant studies which have stressed the importance of humanities for design and have shown that design can be a stimulus for humanities; this

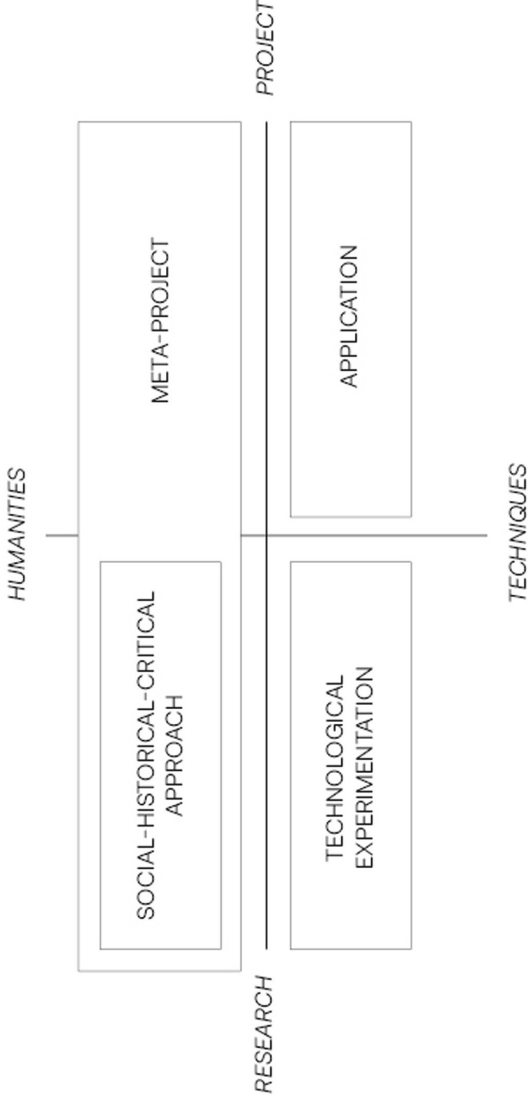


Fig. 1. Potential synergies between design and humanities [1]

is why the conference *Design! O.P.E.N.* intended to be an opportunity for research and debate with the objective of continuing this fundamental line of work.

Some crucial issues which interdisciplinary research must tackle are:

- The research of “new problems for design”, that is, the collective need, as a scientific community, to find new directions toward which work must be periodically re-oriented, and this can be done only through a process of joint reflection.
- Research investigating the “meanings” that the product can have for design.
- Research that investigating the “value” that the design product shows.

As far as meanings are concerned, design and humanities integrated research can challenge, in a theoretically sounder way, “sustainability” by enhancing those concepts that are on the boundary between ethics and aesthetics. Today, design cannot afford to dismiss ethical reflection, and, in this direction, humanistic culture can help to reinterpret the reflection on the mere functionality, in the more philosophically complex terms of the concept of “suitability for the purpose”.

With regards to the analysis of the value generated by the action of design, it may be interesting to speak of “technology of value”, which only humanistic investigation can help to process and fill with tools useful to produce not only ex-post critical knowledge, but first and foremost, oriented toward experimentation and to showing new corridors for contemporary design [1].

The volume follows the paths of reflection which structured the conference *Design! O.P.E.N.*, focusing on current themes and issues that are still at the center of the multidisciplinary debate on design, investigated through four keywords: objects, processes, experiences and narratives, which correspond to the book chapters.

The first chapter focuses on object-oriented design, enhancing its functional narrative and experiential values. In fact, objects, beyond their value in use, bear symbolic, anthropological, political and social meanings and worldviews. This section also develops a theoretical reflection on the esthetic categories used to interpret the design object

in relation to the classic dichotomy useful-beautiful, to the category of game, to artistic values and the relation between ethics and aesthetics.

The second chapter is on the designer's self-reflective moment which is focused on the analysis and on the definition of processes in various contexts, spanning innovation, social engagement, reflection on emergencies or forecasting. This section investigates how designers develop and test their models, both at production, implementation and research levels. The areas of investigation are those addressing innovation, social engagement and pursuing a reflection on emergencies or forecasting. The section is intended as an arena for discussion on topics revolving around both the different moments in the history of design and the contemporary condition. The contributions collected in the Processes Section reflect the current condition of the disciplinary debate, which is strongly characterized by a profound transformation of design processes due to the comparison with scientific research methods, with a prevailing interest for methodologies and contemporary priorities as the environmental one, or to the dematerialization of processes.

The third chapter focuses on as a theoretical and practical strategy aimed at facilitating and fostering experiential interactions among people, between people and objects or environments. This section aims at investigating the foundations and the implications of a specifically experiential turn in design from various perspectives and in various disciplines. Due to the multifaceted nature of this turn, both theoretical and practice-based research are testified by contributors.

Finally, the last chapter is on narrative. The narrative vocation of design represents a crucial key of interpretation in contemporary cultural expressions such as making history, representing through different media, archiving and exhibiting. This section explores narratives in three different "dimensions": narrative as a scenario (envisioning new contexts, behaviors, uses, spaces); narrative as a tool (creating new ways to trigger innovation); and narrative as a process (framing new methodologies to face complex issues).

Each chapter reflects the results of the conference held in Parma and is constituted by the analysis of concrete case studies and theoretical and methodological proposals aimed at highlighting the "multiverse" character of design. It is organized in the thematic subsection defined for the conference program, just to emphasize the prevailing interpretative trajectories.

A special thanks to the institutions that have funded the conference and the present publication (The Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Cultural Industries and CSAC, University of Parma; the Department of Philosophy and Communication Studies, University of Bologna; the Department of Humanities, University of Palermo; the Department of Design, Politecnico di Milano; and the Department of Engineering Enzo Ferrari, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia) and all those who, in different ways, have contributed to reach this result (particularly Alice Biancardi and Marta Elisa Cecchi, and also: Okuniev Avhustyn; Katia Botta; Gabriela Del Rosario Abate; Giorgia Ferri; Salvatore Martino; Serena Massimo; Diego Valle; and Laura Xhaja).

Without their help, it wouldn't have been possible to make this event and this volume happen. We hope that this book will become a useful tool of reflection on the theoretical and methodological aspects between humanities and design.

The scientific committee and book editors:

Giampiero Bosoni, Elisabetta Di Stefano, Gioia Laura Iannilli, Giovanni Matteucci, Rita Messori, Raffaella Trocchianesi and Francesca Zanella.

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Liberating the Imprisoned Soul of Dorian Gray: Cultural Affordance as Design Tool to Rediscover Cultural Values

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Abstract. Design needs to recognize cultural content as embedded values to trigger meanings beyond functionality; these values can be discovered and reinterpreted for the contemporary society. In this context affordance will be declined into cultural affordance as a concept and framework within which meanings could be better detected, resonated and understood. Some examples from Iran and Egypt are given to explain the theoretical framework, while in the continuum some tools for detecting those meanings are introduced as well: interactivism, storytelling and reflective translation as intrinsic memory keepers of tradition and culture of a given context. The article aims to conclude with some manifestations which could shape the direction and scope such a concept. The scope of discussion is to go beyond a naming of mere heritage and assigning artistic value to them.

Keywords: Design · Affordance · Culture · Heritage · Value · Art · Artifact

1 Introduction

1.1 The Picture of Dorian Gray as Reflection of Semantic Crisis

This paper has its metaphorical reference to the famous story of Picture of Dorian Gray [1]. The image of the hero Dorian is suffering from his own sins and mistakes and becomes older, while his body is still young and handsome. One day Dorian wounds the picture with a knife, and the day after people see an old man in front of the painting of the young Dorian. He liberated his soul while accepted to be punished by death.

With this story we propose to make an analogy between the Picture of Dorian Gray and Cultural Artifacts in the museums and cultural centers. The problem we face appears to be the same: the souls, the semantics, are imprisoned in artifacts being and mummified within museums. While there are kitsch versions of such objects in the society which are not useful or understood, they are evaluated as mere decorative item which do have only romantic-historical value and deprived from having any value for today. Based on this argumentation we would like to see how the semantics of such objects could be detected, resonated and distributed in our modern world.

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1.2 Problem Statement and its Interpretation

Many historically inspired objects are beautiful and well-shaped, but the reasons that led such objects to come to live are hidden and therefore there is missing a deeper understanding in the interaction by their users. That apparently could lead to the phenomena that the users cannot reveal the aims in what they possess, ending up with competing to want more, to own more, to consume more, but with discontent, and not happiness. This is also based on the following facts:

- a. through ease of travel and online communication channels, we are much nearer to each other, while culturally we are far more distanced from each other because of a missing appropriation period of time;
- b. We are (always more) disconnected from our past, a source from where we have to offer to each other cultural content and deeper semantics of forms and materials;
- c. Regarding the mentioned above, art is destined to museum objects, and design is relegated to contemporary Gestalt aesthetics, while deeper meaning would be buried in memories as unrevealed intangible heritage.
- d. In a globalized context, we cannot perceive the hidden complexity within which imported objects from other cultures have been shaped with, nor we can perceive our hidden complexity within which our own objects are engaged in (complexity as nesting of a network of affordances, in terms of Gibson) [2]
- e. In some geographical areas with low developed industries this phenomenon is expressed by the refusal of people to use and appreciate local items (handmade to industrially produced) as they are seen of minor quality and less status symbol as imported items.
- f. This lack of meaningful understanding has come to reach results such as overconsumption, un-sustainability and even cultural conflicts.

There has been already some research in this area, entitled as social interaction in cultural context [3]. However, this field in social studies, but moreover from a design point of view is requires more cross-cultural research.

1.3 Research Hypothesis and Structure of the Paper

As natural affordances are shaped and perceived within their related environment, we propose cultural affordances are shaped in cultural context and perceived as such.

Culturally inspired objects (by tradition, by function with geographical relation, by local specific semantics) are considered as tools within which such cultural context could be detected, resonated and perceived.

In this paper we propose to use the concept of cultural affordance [4] in order to evaluate how this can support detecting the possible and potential values of artifacts of cultural heritage. The proposed argumentation is as following:

- a. Art in form of objects contains manifestation of values, which are embeded in human evolution as experience and has been defined through (intangible) cultural heritage (undiscovered meaning) or art works (discovered and acknowledged meaning as art). This argument is mentioned partly by Monticelli [5, 6]

- b. There exist strong resemblances between expressiveness of artists, designers and craftsmen in the process of human evolution. Acknowledging disparities and dissimilarities, however their making process cannot be without any similarity or commonality, whether in aim or in objectification of results.
- c. The affordance theory and its extension to the proposed cultural affordance can be a good concept in order to show a way to detect values (semantics, meaning) and their reflection on artifacts and systems, while detecting those values do need knowledge, methods and theoretical frameworks.
- d. In this paper, narration (storytelling) as reflective translation and making of positive metaphor are considered as good tools in order to detect those hidden values within culture and cultural artifacts.

Related to the last point, we can affirm that storytelling is certainly the oldest form of oral transmission of knowledge and tradition, from generation to generation, long before the advent of written evidence. It represents the treasure of a community, on a larger scale the culture of a society. The narrative paradigm formulated by Walter Fisher states that all meaningful communication takes place through the narration or reporting of events. Humans participate as storytellers and observers of narratives. Fisher addresses five elements:

“First, humans are homo narrans: they are storytellers by nature. Second, the paradigmatic mode of communication is not reasoning, but providing “good reasons”. These reasons imply important values and vary according to the nature of communication practices, objects and situations. Third, the production and evaluation of good reasons is influenced by human history, experience, and culture. Fourth, human rationality is determined by our nature as narrative beings. This means that people have an “intrinsic awareness of narrative probability, what constitutes a coherent story, and their constant habit of testing narrative fidelity, whether or not the stories they experience are true, with the stories of which.” they know that in their stories they are true to life.” Fifth, the world is not a collection of mysteries to be solved. Instead, the world is known as history, and there are always a number of potential stories to choose from to explain the world and our place in it.” [15]

As intrinsic result, objects inside communities are part of these capacity of narration, as by the second argument of Fisher. That leads to the assumption that values related to objects can be understood as cultural affordance. In the following review, the paper will exam the affordance theory and the role it can have in detecting cultural messages within the context. Afterwards it will present some manifestations about Art, Design, Culture and Cultural Affordance theory, and finally, based on these there will be presented a review of some case studies from Iran and Egypt helpful in detecting those values and concluding about the aims of such research approach.

2 Review on Concepts and Their Intrinsic Problematic

2.1 A Review About Affordance Theory and Cultural Contribution to Such Concept

The affordance theory was shaped by James Gibson during his work as a psychologist for US Army [7]. Gibson was employed by U.S. Army during the Second World War in order to improve the flying behavior of US Pilots. He faced the problem that amateur pilots would not fly the plane in the same way a professional pilot would do, and this resulted in accidents. By finding out that professional pilots just led the plane intuitively, this phenomenon led to the difficulty to be scientifically proved, that intuition can be a decision driver, and for which there was no answer at all at that time. Through his work the theory of affordance was elaborated. After years Gerda Smets defended affordance principle as scientific basis for Industrial Design Engineering in TU Delft [8] and that was how Studio-lab was shaped. But in this field of application the theory became very problematic to be assimilated, since not all scientists are interactivists in their nature.

“The interactive model has a number of levels, ranging from the metaphysical to particular theoretical models for particular phenomena. (...) such as learning, emotions, consciousness, language, perception, memory, motivation, neural realizations of mental phenomena, the nature and emergence of social reality, the nature and emergence of human sociality and the social ontology of the person, development, personality and psychopathology, rationality, and so on.” [18]

The discussions and dilemma do refer to a fight between interactivism, which supports the added elements to metaphysical entities for its integrity of perception and representation [9], which is a philosophical theory that bases knowledge on the assertion that the mind perceives only mental images (representations) of material objects outside the mind, not the objects themselves. The validity of human knowledge is thus called into question because of the need to show that such images accurately correspond to the external objects. Therefore, most representationists believe that environment is basically meaningless and it is the human mind which creates meaning. The criticism they have on interactionists is that they believe in a sender and this pushes them to metaphysics and theological arguments instead of scientific discussions.

Defending such an argumentation leads researchers to the concept of Alterity-Otherness [10] which helps the researchers to think about cultural artifacts as objects of human experience which can expand beyond scientific disciplines, geographical borders and time to the others. That leads to the concept of Cultural Affordance. The core of this theory is the acknowledgement of concept of culture or context, within which the existence of the other is perceivable and the underlying messages are detectable as well.

There can be detected common elements in the different approaches to the concept of affordance.

1. Detecting information is direct and without secondary analysis;
2. Affordance emerges from interaction, either subjective or objective;
3. Affordance embeds values and meanings, which invite the receiver to react immediately;

4. Affordance is the meaningful trigger of what to do, while Gestalt deals about what this meaning is.

This paper concentrates on the values and meanings which are inscribed within the cultural artifacts. However, discussing about the interactive nature of affordance, directedness, elements engaged in such a procedure etc. need to be referred to other researches.

2.2 Universality or Context Oriented

Apparently, the design discourse is divided in whether affordance theory is more meaningful or semiotics [11], whether cultural analysis (referring to interactivism) would be more helpful for designers or scientific analysis (referring to representationism). We believe that this division reminds us about cultural or natural origin of the concept of affordance theory. This discussion includes two main approaches:

1. Existence of Alterity, otherness leads to the important meanings from cultural heritage which needs to be discovered in order to prevent previous mistakes, and facilitate evolution of human experience.
2. The separation between culture and nature would have to be ended. This duality exists in the Western philosophy, with approaches like the one of Jean Jacques Rousseau, whose dream is to return to the nature or Sigmund Freud who is writing about the opposition between human instincts and suppressing civilization, which would reach to the concept of discontentness [12]

In the context of designed objects, this discussion becomes complex when considering works of cultural heritage or exploring the artistic values in cultural artifacts. The important art historian Arnheim believes that art anchors its definition on Renaissance Movement and Humanism [13], and previous heritage or heritage from other cultures would not fit in definition of art in Western sense. However, this should also be understood in Arnheim's own temporal context, since today we consider the value of art as a universal manifestation, as does the Charter of Human Rights: this allows us to discover the hidden possible meanings with an open mind.

Just as affordance emerges from interaction, art emerges from dialectics and a struggle to advice humanity in its own contradictions. In other words, the artist- designer-craftsman were facing the same problems or challenges in their time similar to the current challenges of modern designer-artist today.

Reaching this point, the hypothesis we want to shape is that giving cultural context to the value system of directly perceived information, not only affords, but also leads to core interpretations of Global Civilization which needs to be detected, understood, analyzed, resonated and answered in order to overcome the superficial geographic interpretations and could go beyond, towards cultural sophistication avoiding old and new mistakes.

We face several issues while going beyond universality or context-relations [14]: while we agree on the universality of human aims, dreams and intellectual destination, we also agree on context-dependency and different conceptualizations of those intentions. On a unified planet, design with cultural context enriches diversity and meaningful experiences that corresponds to the need of all.

3 Review on Examples from Egypt and Iran

3.1 Critical Design Approach in Egypt to Explore People's Awareness of Cultural Content

This part is the result of one year's research on Islamic Art in Egypt by the first author. The observation related to cultural awareness of artifacts in Egypt is more complex because throughout history, the country was continuously ruled by different populations leading to a potpourri of styles, from Ancient Egyptian Art, at to different styles of Islamic Art.

Particularly the latter, in terms of the aesthetic language, it became amorphous, because of overlaying in time of new ways of expressivity, leading to a complete misplacement of gene, and displacing the idea that artefacts are a product of a culture that involves a particular range of time and space. The result is that people calling anything related to Muslim's culture as Islamic art without distinction of purpose, use and tradition, further historical period and geographical location. Not only in the Western World, but sadly in the own lines of Muslim citizens, from the public to designers, from scholars to artists. The research started from this observation and an exhibition booth was installed in a public park to attract people to interact with. The place was strategically chosen to be able to get in contact with a large sample of people from different social background.

Following the three levels of Donald Norman regarding the acceptance of beauty in design, visceral, behavioral and reflective, interviewed people were attracted to the behavioral and partly reflective emotions acknowledging the visual impact of the presence of Arabic patterns and calligraphy on shown products as "Islamic Art", regardless of the form or function of the object. Demonstration for these preferences was given when high industrialized products, taken on purpose the most common white coffee cup with cylinder shape and altered with stickers with Arabic Patterns, were well considered in line with the local taste.

This first finding was supported by a second experiment, using the "speculative design" approach and test on the acceptance of people of design manipulation, inverting form with decoration in order to establish whether a traditional form has implication on the user's perception. The first of the two objects was a Mishkah, a very well-known traditional lamp from the mosque on which was painted the masterpiece of Edvard Munch "The Scream". The other product was a lamp from IKEA, on which were added geometric patterns.

As result, again the IKEA lamp with generic colorful stickers with a simplified Islamic pattern was preferred, exposing clearly the fact that the understanding of cultural references is only visual, but not context and history related, excluding completely the idea of cultural affordance.

Further experimentation aimed to work with only material and handcrafted items in order to "isolate" the shapes from the decoration and verify if those shapes can be recognized alone as "Islamic". Starting from a initial material-shape experimentation with recycled glass, three bodies of glass had been produced that resemble a Islamic shape of the Mamluk period when put together. However, many different combinations of these three elements were generated in order to evaluate the impact on the formal

character. The “obvious” cultural reference of the forms was less evident, however, the intention of this kind of experimentation was to turn “Arabic” forms in a modern, accepted design language for daily life objects. Based on this, in a workshop-based course in EMOTIONAL DESIGN, participants were asked to “re-design” everyday objects with “Western” shapes applying Arabic forms, while ornaments and patterns were not required and only restrictedly allowed.

As conclusion, it can be stated that to reintegrate into consumer’s mind the value of specific forms and use of material, in a world of technologically evolved performing materials is a challenge. The contemporary design scene in Egypt is tackling this issue: while very successful in being recognizable when Ancient Egyptian motives are included in contemporary design proposals, the much more to the contemporary life style related Arabic character struggles to find an aesthetical response with convincing cultural affordance.

3.2 Example from Iran

3.2.1 Re-Interpreting Art Works from Traditional to Modern

Complex and rich mirrorwork is very deeply anchored in traditional tombs of Iranian Saints and Holy places. They are meant to deepen the personal reflection going beyond the appearance of light by generating a new meaning to the place.

This meaningful value has been reinterpreted by Monir Farmanfarmaian transforming the expressivity into a novel artistic works, which invites the spectator or observer to engage with what is reflected and go beyond. The way Monir arranged the mirrorworks enhances the intrinsic value changing the pure function of mirror in what originally has been the meaning of the tomb mirrorworks, proving the possibility of transferring these intangible values into contemporary objects [15].

Parviz Tanavoli is a contemporary Iranian sculptor. He achieved fame by his most famous sculpting piece called *حیچ* Hich, which means nothingness, and his artificial plays with elements of Iranian tradition and crafts, such as locks, keys, windows and etc. By doing this he was actually experimenting a new language of modernity for Iranian objects that refer to Persian cultural heritage. What he did by using the concept of nothingness, was not denying the tradition, but questioning the tradition, looking for the lost soul which should be returned back to artifact. And this allows for a renewed understanding of what the observer is illusorily observing, but also needs to reframe, rethink and re-understand. Also in the art works of Paris Tanavoli the idea of cultural affordance can be observed in the transformation into contemporary items.

3.2.2 Designedly Examples

Behind the concept of affordance, whether supporting the idea of an intrinsic value system that overlays with intangible meanings a tangible object or not, commonly it is used the concepts of modern, modernity and other definition to root designedly examples in a frame of western classification and recognition.

At the left the image shows a Praying Altar which is traditional, at the right there is the interpretation of the concept of Altar by using tree, blooms and floral elements. This

has been part of the project entitled *Interior design inspired from Modern Narration of Interior Design, through poems of Forough Farrokhzad*. A modern interpretation of the traditional home was used in this project, based on Forough's concept of modern poetry where, for example, blossoms refer to evangelical or good news from heaven or a tree embedding life. All of these would help improve the living experience [16].

4 References for Detecting Cultural Affordances: Reflective Translation

Translations is generally a delicate and complex enterprise, especially when underlying meanings, that can be interpreted only by a native speaker in the context. Single words become consequently a “cultural” trap of misinterpretation, leading to different, misleading and often offensive meanings in certain contexts. These meanings are deeply anchored in the geographical and cultural context. As an example, the definition of beauty and especially translating that concept into another culture is a complex challenge. The effort that needs to be made is not to reduce such an equivalent to a word, definition or phrase, but also to try to find other possible terms that might fit into the translation. In the face of such diversity, the concept of reflective translation can make sense, as it shows that the interpretation reflects the complexity within the culture from which these terms emerge. The table below shows at least there are eight different terms for the concept of beauty in middle eastern culture.

Terminology for Middle Eastern Beauty	Equivalent Meaning
Jamal (جمال)	Visible Beauty
Melahat (ملاحت)	Invisible Beaut
Bahjat (بهجت)	Beauty Coming from Happiness
Sobhan (سبحان)	Beauty Coming from Peace and Clean
Jalal (جلال)	Beauty from Power and Majesty
Talat (طلعت)	Beauty from rising and blooming
Hosn (حسن)	Beauty coming from Ethics
Baha (بهاء)	Beauty coming from Knowledge

As another example understanding the experience of Middle Eastern Home, from terminology of home gives two meanings at least:

مسكن Maskan: a place where SAKINA (SHAKINA) comes to the ground (dwelling)

منزل Manzel: a place where the glory of life (happiness and children) would come to earth

Keeping these concepts in mind would help to better understand the original meaning of objects and environments within culture, and also allow designers to better translate these objects into modern design language. In this context, as an explanatory example standing for many or most other culture-contextual designs, it is necessary to examine

possible positive readings of underlying meanings in order to translate and correctly metaphorize the related context of new design proposal.

Items have two or more prepositions that need to be acknowledged. The artifact in traditional design of the Middle East does not only have practical function but also signifying function as well. As examples:

- a. Geometry is not just geometry, but revealing the hidden heavenly order
- b. Carpet is not just carpet, but a projection of heaven into the home
- c. A cup is not just a cup, but a grail which purifies the soul of the drinker

What appears to be an exaggerate spiritual approach in the eyes of Western population, is a very normal point of view in the related cultural context and varies from geographical context to another. Not observing would mean ignoring the cultural affordance of imbedded life style.

5 Design as a Manifestation and Further Considerations

Narration is a core tool of contemporary design practice, a product without a story confines its use in its function and loses immediately attractivity after putting it away. The second tool that has been explored, is reflective translation, using and exploring the origins of key words to open the core meaning of cultural context in everyday life.

Based on the research of this paper, the following conclusions could be formulated to support the initial hypothesis and related comparative studies:

- a. Meaning emerges from interaction, socio-cultural interaction is as important as physical interaction, they need to be merged together as well.
- b. Past generations, communities and civilizations have left their experiences through generating culture
- c. Applying cultural content on contemporary design (narration) through meaningful interaction helps us to prevent cancellation of identity of oneself, place and community

As stated by the designer Carl Magnussen, “Good design is not about form following function. It is function with cultural content. By adding “cultural content” to the concept of “form follows function”, objects cease to be finite or predictable”. Only if the user is emotionally engaged, the interaction with objects becomes and experience and will exceed the paradigm of function that leads the Western aesthetical predominance of contemporary design.

Further considerations related to this research, which need to be addressed to a different analysis, regard the existence of semantic crisis. It is by the late Prof. Klaus Krippendorff [17], who introduced such a concept. The role of the designer is not just interpreting meaning, but often changing the meaning of those objects that have been designed. (Certain) values are embedded in culture, hence, cultural values cannot be adjusted by comparison to our own values but by living experience within the context and situation which those values are embedded in.

Last, the impact of memory of objects and artifacts with cultural content on personal sense of identity, sense of belonging to a place and community is a crucial element to be evaluated carefully. The research aims to be a introductory essay on design that uses and

applies interactivism, storytelling and reflective translation as intrinsic memory keepers of tradition and culture of a given context.

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